

Nursing and Environmental Health Roundtable

Recognizing the important contributions that nurses make to improving public health and reducing health disparities, the NIEHS, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the National Institute for Nursing Research collaboratively

organized and hosted a roundtable on nursing and environmental health, convened 25–26 August 2002 in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. The roundtable brought together representatives from schools of nursing and public health, state and local health departments, national organizations, and federal agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to identify areas for potential collaborative initiatives to advance environmental health nursing in the areas of research, education, and translation to practice.

A final report of this meeting is available online and upon request (see contact information below). The report highlights the issues discussed by roundtable participants and outlines several proposed priority recommendations to continue advancing work in environmental health nursing. The roundtable report and website also include a list of recommended reading materials pertaining to nursing and environmental health.

Topics discussed during the roundtable included:

Nursing and environmental health clearinghouse

A centralized repository of environmental health journal articles, educational materials, and other resources could provide nurses, especially nurse researchers, with a valuable tool.

Such a clearinghouse could help raise awareness about nurse involvement in environmental health research and enhance overall dissemination of information.

Integration of environmental health materials into existing nursing curricula

Current requirements at schools of nursing make it difficult for nurses to take elective courses in environmental health. Therefore, participants proposed that more work should be done to integrate environmental health materials into existing coursework. In addition, a document should be developed that spotlights schools and universities that are already successfully doing this.

Partnerships and resources

Participants recognized that many federal agencies support nursing in environmental health in some capacity, yet there is limited interaction among the various programs. Therefore, roundtable participants emphasized the importance and the benefits of increased collaboration among federal agencies, as well as between federal agencies and private organizations that support nursing efforts.

Journal coverage of environmental health nursing

Roundtable participants expressed the need for existing nursing journals to showcase important environmental health issues and research advances. Participants also proposed the establishment of a journal specifically targeted to nursing and environmental health.

For more information | <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/translate/nurse-rt.htm>

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